

Appl. No : **09/764,490**
Filed : **January 17, 2001**

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, Claims 1-14 and 92-105 are pending in the present application, new Claims 93-105 are added and Claims 15-91 are canceled without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims in subsequent continuing applications.

Allowable Claims

Applicant gratefully notes the Examiner's indication that Claims 1-14 and 92 are allowed, subject to correction of the objections. Applicant has amended 1, 6 and 7 according to the Examiner's suggestions. Applicant notes that these amendments are not made for any reason related to patentability and the scope of Claims 1, 6 and 7 is not affected by these amendments. Therefore, Claims 1-14 and 92 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicant has added new Claims 93-105, which ultimately depend on Claim 92. Applicant respectfully submits that these dependent claims are also in condition for allowance.

Rejections of Claims 15-51

Claims 15-51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Nierlich et al., and/or under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nierlich et al in view of Ehlers and/or Flig et al. Applicant respectfully traverses each of the Examiner's rejections and each of the Examiner's assertions regarding what the prior art shows or teaches. Although Claims 15-51 are canceled, no acquiescence or estoppel is or should be implied thereby. Rather, these claims are canceled only to expedite allowance and issuance of the remaining claims, and without prejudice to presentation or assertion, in the future, of claims on the subject matter of canceled Claims 15-51.

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CONCLUSION

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections and objections in the present application and to place the claims into condition for allowance. Nevertheless, if any issues remain which can be resolved by telephone, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's representative at the number indicated below in order to resolve such issues promptly.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 9/1/04

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